

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in light of the following discussion and in view of the present amendment, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 5, 7, 12, 14, 16, 18, 19 and 39 are amended. Claims 1-39 are pending.

Entry of Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116

The Applicant requests entry of this Rule 116 Response because: the amendments were not earlier presented because the Applicant believed in good faith that the cited references did not disclose the present invention as previously claimed; and the amendment does not significantly alter the scope of the claim and places the application at least into a better form for purposes of appeal.

The Manual of Patent Examining Procedures (M.P.E.P.) sets forth in Section 714.12 that "any amendment that would place the case either in condition for allowance or in better form for appeal may be entered." Moreover, Section 714.13 sets forth that "the Proposed Amendment should be given sufficient consideration to determine whether the claims are in condition for allowance and/or whether the issues on appeal are simplified." The M.P.E.P. further articulates that the reason for any non-entry should be explained expressly in the Advisory Action.

I. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102

In the Office Action, at page 3, numbered paragraph 3, claims 1-9, 12-16, 18, 19 and 21-38 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 7,039,205 to Carter et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed because Carter does not discuss or suggest:

selectively connecting an audio circuit part co-operable with the
selected audio apparatus type from among the plurality of the
audio circuit parts and each one of the connection ports,

as recited in independent claim 1.

Carter discusses an audio transducer switch 101 having an analog switch 201 receiving audio signals from near and far microphones and handsets, a telephone interface 203 receiving telephony devices, etc. The audio transducer switch 101 acts as an intermediary device between the audio transducers and a computer system 1. The audio transducer switch 101 determines which one or ones of the audio transducers will be electrically connected to the input and output ports of sound card 61.

While Carter discusses that the audio transducer switch 101 has connection ports that allow for connection to multiple audio transducers, and that the audio transducer switch 101 is connected to input and output ports or channels of the sound card 61, Carter does not discuss or suggest that audio circuit parts co-operable with a selected audio apparatus type are selectively connected with each one of the connection ports of the audio transducer switch 101. As the audio transducer switch 101 includes at least an analog switch receiving, for example, four separate input signals from four different audio transducers, and a telephone interface 203 including multiple inputs, the audio transducer switch 101 does not allow for each of the audio transducer connection ports of the audio transducer switch 101 to be selectively connected to an audio circuit part co-operable with a selected audio transducer. The audio transducer switch 101 in Carter determines which one or ones of the audio transducers will be electrically connected to the input and output ports of the sound card 61.

However, Carter does not discuss or suggest that each of the connection ports of the audio transducer switch 101 are able to be connected to a separate audio circuit part, specifically, one that is co-operable with a selected audio transducer. Carter discusses only that the switch 101 determines which of the connection ports to which an audio transducer is connected will be electrically connected to input and output ports of the sound card 61. In contrast, the present invention of claim 1, for example, allow the switching part 60 to selectively connect each connection port 52, 54, 56 to one of the corresponding compatible input, output and line input audio circuit parts 42, 44, 46. Thus, even though each audio apparatus, such as a speaker 82, microphone 84 or CD player 86 is connected to the first connection port 52, the sound card 200 is controlled so that each connected audio apparatus is connected to the corresponding compatible audio circuit part 42, 44, 46. Thus, any of the audio apparatuses of the present invention of claim 1, for example, can work even though a user connects the audio apparatuses to any one of the connection ports 52, 54, 56 independent of the types of the audio apparatuses.

Carter does not allow for the selective connection of an audio circuit part co-operable with an audio apparatus type of the sound card 61 and each one of the connection ports. Carter only allows for connecting one of the connection ports to a corresponding audio circuit part, but does not allow for the connection of each of the connection ports to any of the audio circuit parts that correspond with a selected audio apparatus type.

Therefore, as Carter does not discuss or suggest "selectively connecting an audio circuit part co-operable with the selected audio apparatus type from among the plurality of the audio

circuit parts and each one of the connection ports,” as recited in amended independent claim 1, claim 1 patentably distinguishes over the reference relied upon. Accordingly, withdrawal of the §102(e) rejection is respectfully requested.

Also, Carter does not discuss or suggest “at least two connection ports, an audio apparatus being connected to each of the connection ports; a plurality of audio circuit parts operating according to a type of the audio apparatus; and a control part controlling selective connection of each of the connection ports to one of the plurality of the audio circuits operable with the audio apparatus type connected to the at least one connection port,” as recited in amended independent claim 5, claim 5 patentably distinguishes over the reference relied upon. Accordingly, withdrawal of the §102(e) rejection is respectfully requested.

Further, Carter does not discuss or suggest a sound card including “at least two connection ports, an audio apparatus being connected to each of the connection ports; a plurality of audio circuit parts operating according to a type of the audio apparatus; and a switching part selectively connecting each of the connection ports to one of the plurality of the audio circuit parts operable with the audio apparatus type connected to each connection port,” as recited in amended independent claim 12. In particular, Carter discusses that the sound card 61 is electrically connected to an audio transducer through the input and output ports of the sound card 61, but Carter does not suggest that the sound card 61 includes connection ports or includes a switching part. The audio transducer switch 101 is not provided as part of the sound card 61. Thus, Carter does not suggest a sound card including connection ports, audio circuit parts and a switching part. Further, Carter does not suggest that a switching part selectively connects each of the connection ports to one of the plurality of audio circuit parts. Therefore, claim 12 patentably distinguishes over the reference relied upon. Accordingly, withdrawal of the §102(e) rejection is respectfully requested.

Additionally, Carter does not discuss or suggest a sound card including “two or more connection ports to which audio apparatuses are connected; and an audio signal processor processing input and/or output audio signals from/to the audio apparatuses connected to any one of the connection ports independent of a type of each audio apparatus,” as recited in amended independent claim 14. Carter does not discuss that the connection ports are integral to the sound card or that the audio signal processor is integral to the sound card. Therefore, claim 14 patentably distinguishes over the reference relied upon. Accordingly, withdrawal of the §102(e) rejection is respectfully requested.

Carter also does not discuss or suggest “selecting a multimedia apparatus type for at least one connection port of a plurality of connection ports; and controlling the multimedia component to connect the at least one connection port to a compatible information signal processor of the multimedia component according to the selection, wherein each of the connection ports is selectively connectable to the information signal processor of the multimedia component compatible with the multimedia apparatus type,” as recited in amended independent claim 16. Therefore, claim 16 patentably distinguishes over the reference relied upon. Accordingly, withdrawal of the §102(e) rejection is respectfully requested.

Carter further does not discuss or suggest “a programmed computer processor detecting connection of a multimedia apparatus to one of the connection ports, displaying a graphical user interface comprising connection port images corresponding to the connection ports of the multimedia component, activating multimedia apparatus type selection menus for each connection port image, and controlling the multimedia component to connect the one connection port connected to the detected multimedia apparatus to a compatible information signal processor of the multimedia component according to a multimedia apparatus type selection in the activated multimedia apparatus type selection menu for the one connection port, wherein each of the connection ports is selectively connectable to the information signal processor of the multimedia component compatible with the multimedia apparatus,” as recited in amended independent claim 18. Therefore, claim 18 patentably distinguishes over the reference relied upon. Accordingly, withdrawal of the §102(e) rejection is respectfully requested.

Further, Carter does not discuss or suggest “outputting a first detection signal detecting at least one port of a plurality of connection ports which has the external device connected thereto, wherein each of the connection ports is selectively connectable to one of a plurality of audio circuit parts co-operable with the external device connected to each of the connection ports,” as recited in amended independent claim 19. Therefore, claim 19 patentably distinguishes over the reference relied upon. Accordingly, withdrawal of the §102(e) rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 2-4, 6-9, 13, 15 and 21-38 depend either directly or indirectly from one of independent claims 1, 5, 12, 14 and 19 and include all the features of their respective independent claims, plus additional features that are not discussed or suggested by the references relied upon. For example, claim 7 recites “a switching part controlled by the type selection program to selectively connect the plurality of the audio circuit parts and the at least two connection ports to each other.” Therefore, claims 2-4, 6-9, 13, 15 and 21-38 patentably

distinguish over the reference relied upon for at least the reasons noted above. Accordingly, withdrawal of the §102(e) rejection is respectfully requested.

II. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103

In the Office Action, at pages 14, numbered paragraph 5, claims 10, 11 and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Carter and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,504,553 to Fado et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

As discussed above, Carter does not discuss or suggest all the features of amended independent claims 5 and 16. Fado fails to make up for the deficiencies in Carter. Therefore, claims 5 and 16 patentably distinguish over the references relied upon.

Claims 10, 11 and 17 depend either directly or indirectly from one of independent claims 5 and 16 and include all the features of their respective independent claims, plus additional features that are not discussed or suggested by the references relied upon. For example, claim 10 recites that "in the user selection window is a connection port display window to display whether the audio apparatus is connected to a corresponding connection port via each displayed connection port." Therefore, claims 10, 11 and 17 patentably distinguish over the references relied upon for at least the reasons noted above. Accordingly, withdrawal of the §103(a) rejection is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, at page 16, numbered paragraph 6, claims 20 and 39 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Carter and further in view of U.S. Publication No. 2003/0041189 to Choi et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed because the combination of the teachings of Carter and Choi does not suggest:

- outputting a first detection signal detecting at least one port of a plurality of connection ports which has the external device connected thereto;

- displaying an indication to the user in dependence of the first signal; and

- assigning a function to the detected port;

- wherein the assigning function comprises selecting either one of receiving a signal from an external device or sending a signal to an external device, and

- wherein each of the connection ports is selectively connectable to one of the input and/or output ports co-operable with the external device connected to each of the connection ports,

Carter does not discuss or suggest selecting either one of receiving a signal from an external device or sending a signal to an external device and does not discuss or suggest that

each of the connection ports is selectively connectable to one of the input and/or output ports co-operable with the external device connected to each of the connection ports. Also, Carter does not suggest displaying an indication to the user in dependence of the first signal.

Choi fails to make up for the deficiencies in Carter. Choi discusses detecting whether a peripheral device is connected to a port of the computer and displaying an operating state of the peripheral device. Choi does not discuss or suggest displaying an indication of a detection signal detecting one of the ports that has the external device connected thereto. Choi only discusses displaying the operating state of the peripheral device, not which port the peripheral device is connected to. Further, Choi does not discuss or suggest that each of connection ports is selectively connectable to one of input and/or output ports co-operable with the external device connected to each of the connection ports, and also does not discuss or suggest selecting either one of receiving a signal from an external device or sending a signal to an external device.

Therefore, as the combination of the teachings of Carter and Choi does not suggest all the features of amended independent claim 39, claim 39 patentably distinguishes over the references relied upon. Accordingly, withdrawal of the §103(a) rejection is respectfully requested.

As discussed above, claim 19, from which claim 20 directly depends, is not discusses or suggested by Carter. Choi fails to make up for the deficiencies in Carter. Therefore, claim 20 patentably distinguishes over the references relied upon. Accordingly, withdrawal of the §103(a) rejection is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 1, 5, 7, 12, 14, 16, 18, 19 and 39 have been amended. Claims 1-39 are pending and under consideration.


There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

STAAS & HALSEY LLP

By: 

Kari P. Footland
Registration No. 55,187

Date: December 18, 2007

1201 New York Avenue, N.W., 7th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005
Telephone: (202) 434-1500
Facsimile: (202) 434-1501